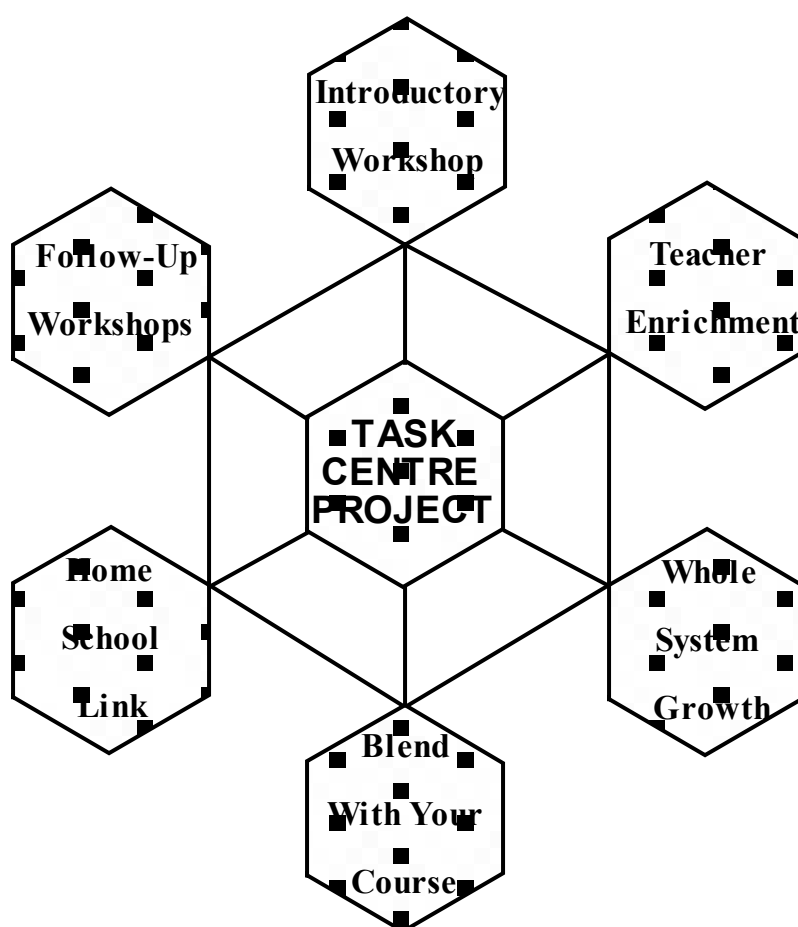


The Task Centre Big Picture

In the years since Neville de Mestre and Bea Duncan first packaged mathematics problems with hands-on materials, task centres have been both successful and unsuccessful in a variety of schools. The current national MCTP Mathematics Task Centre Project of Curriculum Corporation has investigated the elements which are most likely to contribute to the success of a task centre resource, and, in a unique professional development program, offers both a time saving collection of packaged tasks and a well researched workshop day which comes from teachers for teachers.

The national project has recently developed the Task Centre Web to help it visualise the outgrowths into which it has been led.

The Task Centre Web



Introductory Workshop

This offers 100 hands-on mathematics tasks and a full day professional development program to explore their use in the particular school. It is packaged with a Teachers' Handbook (which contains contributions from the NT experience, model lessons, poster problems and sample unit plans.

Teacher Enrichment

The package provides the opportunity to expand current practice to include problem solving, cooperative group work and concrete, active learning. Stories of struggle and success from colleagues encourage this development.

Blend With Your Course

Because the problem solving tasks address all content strands and simultaneously encourage Working Mathematically they can be adapted to any faculty's objectives and profiling plans.

Home-School Link

Maths task borrowing for home use has become part of some school's curriculum - maths around the kitchen table. Some schools are storing cross-curricula tasks in the library so they be accessed for integrated studies. The problems also offer alternative learning tasks during extended illness.

Many schools have regular parent participation as tutors, equipment managers and resource developers.

Follow-Up Workshops

A myriad of follow-up workshops is developing which allow staff to create their own in-house PD by selecting from a menu of two hour modules such as:

- Replanning the Faculty Curriculum
- Problem Solving and Assessment
- Unit Plans in Algebra (Space, Measurement, Number Chance & Data, ... Logic, Cross-curricula)
- Working Mathematically
- Beyond the Tip of the Iceberg

Whole System Growth

The Task Centre Project has successfully contributed to large scale teacher enhancement through the Northern Territory adaptation to Aboriginal students in remote schools. It is also supporting the role of regional mathematics consultants around the country, some of whom have arranged to offer the project workshop as part of their role.

We are also being requested to play an integral part in PD planning for regional clusters and have established task centres and a small export market in both the USA and UK.

In The Picture

It may be that Charles Lovitt and I sit in the hub of the web, but in fact it is as communication channels rather than managers. As with all MCTP programs the objective is simply to capture and make available the wisdom of classroom practice. The outgrowths described have all been suggested by, and most importantly executed by, classroom teachers with a commitment to better education for their students. It is refreshing for us to be able to share this growth with the Task Centre Network which has its own long established web.

Doug Williams, Task Centre Project Officer